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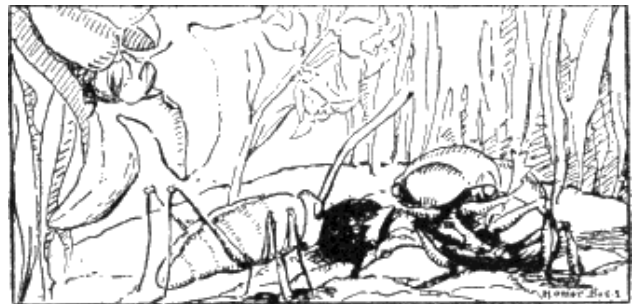
# Ririro

IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

Ririro

## Maya the Bee meets Effie and Bobbie (4/17)

Maya had slept wonderfully in the crown of a beautiful blue flower. She woke up to the sound of light tapping on the flower petals. It was raining! It was the first time in Maya's young life that she had seen rain. She thought it was beautiful, but she also knew that rain was something to be careful of for a Bee. Miss Cassandra had warned her early on about rain. With wet wings, it was much harder to fly, and the rain could also be very cold on the body. She stuck her head between the flower petals to see what was happening down in the grass.



Slowly her thoughts drifted to the Beehive, and she began to feel a little homesick for the protection it provided. The rain would mean that there would be no work for a while. The Queen Bee would make her rounds to greet all the Bees and lay an egg here and there. She began to feel a little lonely, and she was also getting cold. "I hope it stops raining soon," she thought, "because as beautiful as this flower is, it doesn't have much nectar."

Then she realized that the sun was of great importance in the life of an adventurer. "Without the sun, almost no one would go on adventures," she thought, and she felt proud that she had the courage to start a life on her own. She had already experienced so much, much more than the other Bees would ever experience in their lives. Experience was the most precious thing in life and worth any sacrifice, she thought.

A troop of ants marched by, singing a song together as they moved through the grass. Suddenly a dandelion was brutally pushed aside by a large blue beetle. It looked like a half-sphere of dark metal with blue, green, and occasionally black lights glittering here and there. Its hard shell looked like nothing could destroy it. The song of the ant soldiers had apparently awakened him from his sleep. He looked very angry and shouted, "Make way! I'm coming! Make way!"

He probably thought the group of ants would move out of his way. "I'm glad I'm not in his way," thought Maya, and she withdrew further into the flower's bell. The beetle moved with a swinging motion through the wet grass and stopped still under Maya's flower. On the ground, she saw a withered leaf that the beetle moved aside. Underneath, Maya saw a hole in the ground. Maya kept very still. The only sound was the soft pattering of the rain.

Then she heard the beetle call through the hole, "If you want to marry me, you must decide now to get up. It's already day." Several moments passed before the answer came. Then Maya heard a thin, chirping voice rising from the hole.

"For heaven's sake, close the door up there. It's raining inside."

The beetle obeyed. He stood in an expectant posture, his head a little to the side, and peered through the crack.

"Please hurry," he grumbled.

A brown insect slowly crawled out of the hole. It had a chubby body, extremely thin, slow-moving legs, and a frighteningly thick head with small, upright feelers.

"Good morning, dear Effie," said the beetle. "Did you sleep well, my dearest?"

"I'm not going with you, Bobbie," she replied. "People are talking about us."

"I don't understand," stammered the beetle. "Must our newly found happiness be destroyed by such nonsense? Effie, think about it. What do you care about what humans say? You have your hole. You can crawl into it

whenever you want. And if you go deep enough, you won't hear any of the gossip above ground."



"Bobbie, you don't understand. I have my own ideas about this. Besides, you took advantage of my ignorance. You let me think

you were a rose beetle, but yesterday a snail told me you're a dung beetle. And that's quite different, isn't it?" Bobbie was stunned. When he had recovered from the shock, he shouted angrily, "No, I don't understand. I

can't understand. Love is something you feel for each other, no matter who you are, isn't it?"

"Well, it matters to me," Effie replied. "If you're a creature that likes to roll around in manure, then I have to tell you that such behavior doesn't suit me. So, goodbye!"

And... POOF...Effie crawled into her hole as if a gust of wind had blown her away. Effie was gone, and Bobbie stared in astonishment at the empty, dark opening. It looked so silly that Maya had to laugh. The beetle shook his head, and his antennae drooped down. "People don't appreciate the strength of character anymore, and respect for each other is hard to come by," he sighed. "I can't admit it to myself, but she's absolutely heartless. But even if she doesn't have the right feelings for me, she should be wise enough to marry me and be my wife."

Maya saw the tears welling up in his eyes, and her heart was filled with pity.

"Goodness gracious," she thought, "there is indeed a lot of sorrow in the world."

Then she saw the beetle bite off a piece of a worm and eat it. And the rest of the worm just kept on wriggling?!! "How incredibly strange," Maya thought. She wanted to ask the beetle about it and called out, "Hello there!" The beetle was startled. "Move over!" the beetle cried.

"But I'm not in your way," Maya said.

"Where are you then? I can't see you," said the beetle.

"I'm up here in the blue flower," Maya called out.

"Okay, but I can't see you. Why did you call me?"

"The other half of the worm is getting away," Maya said.

"Yes," Bobbie said, "they are very lively creatures. But I've lost my appetite." Then he threw away the piece of worm he had bitten off, and even this part of the worm scurried away, but in the opposite direction.

Maya was completely confused. But Bobbie seemed to be familiar with this peculiarity of worms.

"Don't think I always eat worms," the beetle remarked.

"I prefer roses, but you don't find those everywhere."

"Tell the little piece of worm which way its other half went," Maya called out excitedly.

Bobbie shook his head and spoke in a serious tone, "Those torn apart by fate are never reunited. And who are you?"

"Maya, of the Bee People."

"I'm glad to hear that," the beetle said. "I have nothing against the bees. Why are you sitting there? Bees usually don't sit still. Have you been there long?"

"I slept here," Maya said.

"I hope you slept well," Bobbie said, sounding angry.

"Just woke up?"

"Yes," said Maya, who had cleverly guessed that Bobbie wouldn't like it if she had eavesdropped on his conversation with Effie the cricket.

"I'm Bobbie, from the family of the rose beetles," said the beetle.

Maya had to laugh to herself, because she knew very well that he wasn't a rose beetle, but a dung beetle.

But she didn't say anything about it because she didn't want to hurt his feelings.

"Are you not bothered by the rain?" she asked.

"No, I'm used to the rain, through the roses, you know. Where roses grow, it usually rains."

Maya thought to herself, "Now he really has to stop with all these lies. I won't let him fool me any longer."

"Bobbie," she said with a mischievous smile, "what is that hole under the leaf?"

"A hole? A hole, you say? There are many holes here. It's probably just a hole. You have no idea how many holes there are in the ground."

Bobbie had hardly finished speaking when something terrible happened. In his attempt to act like it didn't bother him, he lost his balance and fell over. Maya heard a desperate cry and the next moment she saw the beetle flat on his back in the grass. His arms and legs were waving in the air.

"Oh goodness!" squeaked the beetle. "I'll never be able to stand on my legs again. I'll die. I'm going to die in this position. Have you ever heard of a worse fate?"

And Bobbie kept trying to touch the ground with his feet. But every time he managed to grab a bit of earth with difficulty, he fell back on his high half-sphere of a back. The situation looked really hopeless. Maya began to worry seriously. He was turning very pale in the face and his cries were heart-rending.

"Wait!" she shouted. "I'll try to turn you over. If I try very hard, I'm sure I can do it. But you have to stop screaming and listen to me. If I bend a blade of grass forward and bend the tip toward you, can you use it to get yourself in the right position?"

So little Maya flew, despite the rain, from her protective spot in the flower to a thin green blade of grass next to Bobbie and clung to it at the tip. It bent under her weight and sank right above Bobbie's wriggling limbs.

"Hold on to it," she shouted.

Bobbie quickly grabbed it, first with one hand, then with the other, and finally with his legs. Little by little, he pulled himself along the blade of grass until he reached the thicker and stronger part of the grass. Now he could hold onto it better and turn himself over with it. He let out a huge sigh of relief.

"Thank heavens!" he exclaimed. "That was terrible!"

"Are you feeling better now?" Maya asked.

Bobbie grabbed his forehead. "Thank you, Maya. Thank



you very much. When my dizziness is over, I'll tell you everything about myself."

But Maya didn't hear anything more. A field mouse came hopping through the grass looking for insects. Maya hid and lay very still on the ground until the bird was gone.

When she looked around for Bobbie, he was gone. So she decided to go on her way too, because the rain had stopped and the day was clear and warm.